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SUBJECT: ALEXANDRIA: A "DEEPLY DIVIDED" CITY

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11. (CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.)

12. SUMMARY. THE JULY 2 PRESENTATION, TO THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, OF THE PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATIVE REPORT ON ALEXANDRIA GOVERNOR FAWZI MA'AZ'S CONDUCT OF OFFICE DID NOT STOP THE DEBATE. INDEED, NEW CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES HAVE EMERGED DURING THE SUMMER WHICH INDICATE THAT THIS ISSUE IS FAR FROM DEAD. IN RESPONSE TO HIS TROUBLES, THE GOVERNOR HAD REMOVED TWO OF ALEXANDRIA'S TOP POLITICAL OFFICIALS, LEAVING THE CITY WITH AN EMBATTLED GOVERNOR AND TWO NEWCOMERS TO COPE WITH ALEXANDRIA'S MOUNTING PROBLEMS. HE HAS ALSO SUED WAFD PARTY AND NEWSPAPER LEADERSHIP FOR LIBEL. WHILE THERE AREN'T TOO MANY HEROES IN THIS STORY, THE EMERGING POLITICAL ROLE OF MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, YOUSSEF WALLY, IS WORTH NOTING. END SUMMARY.

13. POLITICS, THIS SUMMER, IN THE VERY POLITICAL CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, HAVE REVOLVED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY AROUND THE PROBLEMS OF GOVERNOR FAWZI MA'AZ (REFS A AND B). WHILE THE GOE APPARENTLY ELECTED TO CUBBY-HOLE THE REPORT PRODUCED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE (REF A), THIS WAS NOT ACHIEVED WITHOUT A SOMEWHAT TUMULTUOUS LAST DAY OF PARLIAMENT-- AND AT LEAST SOME DAMAGE, WE HEAR, TO THE REPUTATION OF PEOPLES ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, RIFAAT AL MAHGOUB. ALTHOUGH NO PUBLISHED ACCOUNT TELLS US WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REPORT (SOME BELIEVE IT WAS REFERRED TO THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT; OTHERS THINK THE REPORT, AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, WENT TO THE SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR), THE GOVERNMENT IS PERCEIVED AS HAVING TAKEN NO ACTION IN THE MA'AZ CASE, AND ATTACKS IN THE WEEKLY "WAFD" HAVE CONTINUED UNABATED. THE GOVERNOR HAS ENMESHED HIMSELF FURTHER BY GIVING INTERVIEWS WHICH, FAR FROM EXONERATING HIM, HAVE NOT ONLY KEPT THE DEBATE ALIVE, BUT PROVIDED NEW AMMUNITION FOR CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES.

-- NEAR THE END OF THE SUMMER, AND BECAUSE OF PERCEIVED WRONG ACTIONS ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE SEWAGE DEBATE HAS RESURFACED, BOTH IN ALEXANDRIA AND IN THE COLUMNS OF ALL NATIONAL DAILIES. THIS PROUD CITY IS NOT ONLY BEING HELD UP TO NATIONAL RIDICULE, BUT THE APPARENT DRIFT AND INDECISIVENESS--ON BOTH THE MA'AZ CASE AND THE SEWAGE OUTFALL QUESTION--HAVE LEFT BOTH OBSERVERS AND PARTICIPANTS WITH THE IMPRESSION OF "A WEAK GOVERNMENT"--IN THE WORDS OF ONE OF MA'AZ'S FELLOW GOVERNORS.

14. THE LAST DAY OF PARLIAMENT: BY ALL ACCOUNT, THE LAST DAY OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, JULY 2, WAS A LIVELY OR "MELODRAMATIC" (IN THE WORDS OF "AL SHAAB" JULY 9) OCCASION. THE 41-PAGE REPORT ON GOVERNOR MA'AZ WAS DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS ONLY THAT MORNING. TWO NDP AND TWO WAFD MEMBERS WERE ALLOWED BRIEFLY TO DISCUSS THE SANITIZED (ACCORDING TO THE "WAFD," JULY 18) REPORT. THE LAST SESSION OF PARLIAMENT, HEAVILY MANAGED BY SPEAKER RIFAAT AL MAGHOUB, LASTED ONLY TWO HOURS AND 20 MINUTES AND SAW THE PASSAGE OF 6 NEW LAWS

AND THE APPROVAL OF 14 REPORTS. THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ITEM WAS NOT EVEN ON THE AGENDA: AT THE REQUEST GOVERNOR MA'AZ, THE NDP MOVED TO LIFT THE PARLIAMENTARY IMMUNITY OF "WAFD" EDITOR, AND PA MEMBER FOR PORT SAID, MOUSTAPHA SHERDY. IN ALEXANDRIA, WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOVERNOR MA'AZ HOSTED AN INFORMAL RECEPTION IN HIS OFFICE THAT DAY TO CELEBRATE THE EVENTS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE IN CAIRO. COMMENT: ANOTHER LOCAL ECHO OF CAIRO'S DRAMATIC EVENTS WAS THAT MA'AZ SENT HIS SECRETARY TO THE CONSULATE GENERAL THAT DAY TO PROCURE A VISA FOR HIS SON: "HE PROBABLY IS ASKING FOR THIS NOW, BECAUSE HE WON'T BE AROUND MUCH LONGER," COMMENTED HIS SECRETARY. END COMMENT.

15. LIFTING SHERDY'S PARLIAMENTARY IMMUNITY: BY MOST ACCOUNTS, INCLUDING NDP, THE SUCCESSFUL ACTION TO LIFT SHERDY'S IMMUNITY (PROPOSED BY MA'AZ DEFENDER FAROUK GARANA, SEE PARA 7), WAS EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY. IT PROVOKED A WAFD BOYCOTT OF PRESIDENT MUBARAK'S TRADITIONAL TEA ON THE LAST DAY OF PARLIAMENT, A ONE DAY RESIGNATION FROM THE WAFD LEADERSHIP BY FOUAD SERAG EL DIN, AND A FIRESTORM IN NATIONAL PRESS, MOST NOTABLY IN THE "WAFD," WHICH INTER ALIA, CHALLENGED THE GOE TO SHOW ON TELEVISION THE COMPLETE FOOTAGE OF THE LAST DAY OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY (A CHALLENGE NOT YET TAKEN UP). AN UNREPENTANT SHERDY HELD FORTH IN A PAGE ONE EDITORIAL IN THE JULY 11 EDITION OF THE "WAFD," DECRYING MAGHOUB'S MANAGEMENT OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY AND ATTACKING THE SPEAKER IN STRONG LANGUAGE: "THE DOG AT THE CENTER OF POWER... KNOWS HE IS NOTHING BUT A MERE CORPSE SITTING IN THE (SPEAKER'S) CHAIR... WHOSE PEN DISCHARGES NOTHING BUT PUS. I WOULD LIKE TO TELL HIM THAT MY FEELING TOWARDS HIM NOW IS THE FEELING OF PITY." THE SAME EDITORIAL ALSO (AND FINALLY) GOT TO THE HEART OF WAFD CHARGES AGAINST MA'AZ: "MA'AZ SHOULD NOT SLIP AWAY FROM PUNISHMENT (BUT) MA'AZ IS NOT THE ONLY PROBLEM. THE BIG PROBLEM IS THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION IN EGYPT. THE 'WAFD' BELIEVES DEEPLY THAT THE CAMPAIGN WE ARE STARTING IN ALEXANDRIA SHOULD TEACH THE REST (OF THE COUNTRY) A GOOD LESSON." COUNTER-ATTACKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT, MOUSSA SABRY (AL AKHBAR, JULY 14) WROTE A PAEAN OF PRAISE FOR MA'AZ, REMINDED HIS READERS THAT SHERDY LIVED "IN THE GULF COUNTRIES FOR 12 YEARS," AND ACCUSED SHERDY OF THINKING THAT "THE PEN IS A CLEAVER IN THE HAND OF A BUTCHER." SABRY'S EDITORIAL WAS ENTITLED "CHAOS." MA'AZ AND ALEXANDRIA'S LOCAL POPULAR COUNCIL PRESIDENT, EZZAT KADDOUS (REF A) SUBSEQUENTLY BROUGHT LIBEL SUITS AGAINST WAFD PARTY LEADER FOUAD SERAG EL DIN, AND THREE "WAFD" NEWSPAPER STAFFERS, SHERDY, BADAWI AND THE NEWSPAPER'S CARTOONIST. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FIRST SITTING OF THE TRIAL WILL BE IN THE GIZA DISTRICT COURT OCTOBER 8. BECAUSE SOME HARSH FEELINGS, REGARDING THE JULY 2 SESSION OF THE PA, REMAIN, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THE GOE WILL WANT TO COMPLETE (OR OTHERWISE GET PAST) THIS LIBEL CASE BEFORE PARLIAMENT RECONVENES IN NOVEMBER.

16. MA'AZ, "ATTEMPTING TO SAVE HIMSELF": MA'AZ SPENT THE REMAINDER OF THE MONTH OF JULY GIVING INTERVIEWS IN GOE-SPONSORED DAILIES AND MASS-CIRCULATION MAGAZINES ATTEMPTING TO EXCULPATE HIMSELF FROM THE CORRUPTION CHARGES: THE THRUST OF THE ATTACKS AGAINST HIM HAD MOVED FROM POOR MANAGEMENT CHOICES REGARDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (REF A) TO PROFITEERING ON LAND DEALS. AFTER THREE TIMES, IN THE COURSE OF THESE INTERVIEWS, ATTEMPTING TO SHIFT BLAME TO A FORMER GOVERNOR FOR PROFITEERING ON BEDOUIN LAND IN THE BEACH RESORT AREA OF AGAMI, THE SON OF KAMAL EL DIB (GOVERNOR OF ALEXANDRIA UNDER NASSER AND SADAT) STRUCK BACK. THE GOE-SPONSORED PRESS DECLINED TO PUBLISH HIS STATEMENT, BUT ON AUGUST 28, THE "WAFD" CARRIED A BANNER HEADLINE STORY, WHICH INCLUDED A PHOTOCOPY OF A DEED SIGNED BY MA'AZ. COMMENT: MOUFID EL DIB, THE SON OF THE FORMER

GOVERNOR, TOLD US THAT HE IGNORED THE FIRST MA'AZ CHARGE, BUT AS THE GOVERNOR EMBELLISHED THE STORY THROUGHOUT THE S, HE FELT THAT HIS DECEASED FATHER'S HONOR, INDEED THAT OF THE WHOLE FAMILY, WAS AT STAKE. HE ALSO TOLD US THAT THE GOE OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF "STATE" (BEDOUIN) LAND IN AGAMI (THROUGH WHO MA'AZ CONDUCTED HIS LAND DEALS) WAS RECENTLY REMOVED FROM HIS POST. TO GIVE AN IDEA OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROFITEERING, EL DIB REPORTED THAT MA'AZ (WHILE STILL A POLICE OFFICER) HAD PAID THE STATE 173 PIASTERS PER SQUARE METER FOR THE LAND, BUT THAT EL DIB--NOT HIS FATHER--HAD BOUGHT IT FROM MA'AZ AT LE 200 PER SQUARE METER. END COMMENT. WHILE SPEAKING PUBLICLY ABOUT THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM, MA'AZ MOVED QUIETLY BEHIND THE SCENES TO RID HIMSELF OF TWO OF ALEXANDRIA'S POLITICAL BARONS--MEN WHOM HE BELIEVED, ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS, HAD NOT SUPPORTED HIM SUFFICIENTLY IN HIS TIME OF NEED. IN SO DOING, HE HAS REMOVED FROM THE LOCAL SCENE TWO OF THE MOST DYNAMIC, WELL-KNOWN NATIONALLY, AND (BY MOST ACCOUNTS) EFFECTIVE, POLITICAL LEADERS IN ALEXANDRIA: ALEXANDRIA'S SECRETARY GENERAL (NUMBER TWO PERSON IN THE GOVERNORATE AFTER MA'AZ HIMSELF), SHAKER ABDEL SALAAM, AND LOCAL NDP PARTY HEAD, MOHAMED ABDELLAH.

17. NDP PARTY LEADERSHIP: A SMALL PAGE ONE ANNOUNCEMENT, IN "AL AHRAH" AUGUST 12, INFORMED READERS THAT MAHMOUD DAOUD, HEAD OF EGYPT'S COTTON BOARD AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE UNDER SADAT, HAD REPLACED MOHAMED ABDELLAH AS NDP PARTY CHIEF IN ALEXANDRIA. WHILE THE BUSY ABDELLAH, CHAIRMAN OF THE PA FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, AND PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION LEADER FOR ALEXANDRIA, HAD FOUR TIMES ATTEMPTED TO SUBMIT HIS RESIGNATION FROM THE ALEX PARTY POST, HE WAS ACTUALLY FIRED BY SOBHI ABDEL HAKIM, SHURA COUNCIL SPEAKER AND SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE NDP. AT (WE ARE TOLD) MA'AZ'S INSTIGATION, A TEN-PERSON DELEGATION COMPRISED OF PA AND SHURA COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM ALEXANDRIA, AND LED BY PA MEMBER (AND MA'AZ ALLY) FAROUK GARANA, SOUGHT A MEETING WITH SOBHI TO COMPLAIN ABOUT ABDELLAH'S NUMEROUS ABSENCES FROM ALEXANDRIA, AND PARTY DRIFT HERE. MUCH OF THE SESSION HARKED BACK TO THE TUMULTUOUS MEETING AT NDP ALEX HEADQUARTERS IN APRIL (REF A). ABDELLAH, IN TRUE ALEXANDRIAN FAS MANAGED TO HAVE SEVERAL SUPPORTERS INCLUDED IN THE DELEGATION--WHO SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN THE STEPS ABDELLAH HAD TAKEN SINCE THAT TIME TO HEAL PARTY WOUNDS, AND MA'AZ'S REFUSAL TO COOPERATE WITH ABDELLAH. THE FACT OF ABDELLAH'S FREQUENT ABSENCES FROM ALEXANDRIA, HOWEVER, COULD NOT BE DISPUTED, AS HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM PA TRIPS TO BOTH THE PRC AND THE USSR (REF C). ABDELLAH MAINTAINS HE WAS CONSULTED ON HIS OWN OUSTER AND WAS GIVEN THE COURTESY OF A PRIORI VETOES ON THREE POSSIBLE SUCCESSORS (NOTABLY, GARANA). MOST ACCOUNTS HOLD THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY YOUSSEF WALLY, GOE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NDP, WHO SUGGESTED DAOUD AS THE NEW PARTY LEADER FOR ALEXANDRIA--NOT ABDELLAH, AS ABDELLAH NOW TRIES TO CLAIM. ACCORDING TO DAOUD, HIS COURTESY CALL ON NDP CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT MUBARAK, REVOLVED LESS AROUND ALEXANDRIA'S MOUNTING PROBLEMS, THAN AROUND MUBARAK'S HORTATORY (AND SOMEWHAT MISPLACED, GIVEN THE MOODS IN ALEXANDRIA) COMMENTS TO DAOUD TO BREATHE LIFE BACK INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN ALEXANDRIA. AT DINNER THE WEEK OF HIS SELECTION, THE SOMEWHAT ELDERLY DAOUD ACKNOWLEDGED THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS HE FACES HERE, AND SAID HIS FIRST PRIORITY MUST BE TO HEAL THE WOUNDS IN THIS "DEEPLY DIVIDED CITY."

18. THE SECRETARY GENERALSHIP: THE FORMER CLOSENESS OF FAWZI MA'AZ AND SHAKER ABDEL SALAAM (BOTH POLICE GENERALS) CANNOT BE EXAGGERATED.

THEY APPEARED EVERYWHERE TOGETHER AND ALL THE CITY'S PROBLEMS WERE ADDRESSED, IN A FASHION, BY MA'AZ NAMING SHAKER TO HEAD A "STUDY COMMITTEE." SHAKER EVEN GAINED NATIONAL PROMINENCE AS HEAD OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR USAID'S SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN SERVICES (NUS) PROJECT IN THE THREE URBAN GOVERNORATES OF CAIRO, GIZA AND ALEXANDRIA. SHAKER'S DOOR AT THE GOVERNORATE WAS ALWAYS OPEN TO CALLERS, WHEREAS THE ALOOF MA'AZ HOLDS ONLY TST PERFUNCTORY (AND GENERALLY NON-SUBSTANTIVE) COURTESY SESSIONS WITH VISITORS. WE HAD EARLIER SPECULATED ON (WHAT WAS VIEWED LOCALLY AS) THE NEAR MIRACLE THAT SHAKER'S NAME WAS NEVER ASSOCIATED WITH THAT OF MA'AZ IN THE NUMEROUS "WAFD" ARTICLES, ALTHOUGH SHAKER WAS PERCEIVED LOCALLY AS HEAVILY INVOLVED IN PRIVATE BUSINESS DEALS, WHEREAS MA'AZ (UNTIL RECENTLY) WAS NOT. WE ALSO RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS ALEXANDRIANS THAT SHAKER WAS QUIETLY BETRAYING THE GOVERNOR, IN AN ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIMSELF; THESE SAME SOURCES REPORTED THAT THEY HAD TOLD THE GOVERNOR THE SAME THING. ALTHOUGH THE ACTUAL CAUSE FOR SHAKER'S SUDDEN TRANSFER TO THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN CAIRO REMAINS UNKNOWN, IT IS CLEAR THAT HE WAS PUT OUT TO PASTURE BY MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AND ANOTHER FORMER POLICE GENERAL) ABU BASHA--AT THE REQUEST OF MA'AZ. ALLEGEDLY FURIOUS AT HIS TRANSFER TO THE NON-POSITION OF "SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER," SHAKER REPORTEDLY HAS RESIGNED FROM THE GOVERNMENT. COMMENT: MA'AZ APPEARS DETERMINED TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES IN THE MIDST OF THIS TURMOIL: IN A MEETING WITH VISITING USG OFFICIALS AUGUST 21, MA'AZ POINTEDLY TOLD US THAT SHAKER HAD RECEIVED A "BIG PROMOTION." THE SAME DAY, THE GOVERNOR LED THE DELEGATION TO THE FUNERAL IN ALEXANDRIA OF SHAKER'S MOTHER. END COMMENT. ACCORDING TO ABDELLAH, A DISHEARTENED, AND INCREASINGLY ISOLATED, MA'AZ TOLD THE MINISTER TO "NAME ANYONE" TO REPLACE SHAKER--A HIGHLY UNUSUAL POSITION FOR ANY SENIOR MANAGER REGARDING THE SELECTION OF HIS DEPUTY. BUT, THAT IS WHAT THE MINISTER DID: FAYEZ OSMAN, FORMER HEAD OF THE EASTERN ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT, IS ALEXANDRIA'S NEW SECRETARY GENERAL. A FORMER ARMY OFFICER WHO LOST HIS RIGHT HAND IN THE 1956 WAR, THE CONGENIAL AND LOW-KEY OSMAN IS DUE FOR RETIREMENT IN A YEAR OR SO. THIS LEAVES THIS TROUBLED CITY WITH AN EMBATTLED AND ISOLATED GOVERNOR, A CARETAKER SECRETARY-GENERAL--AND A POLITICALLY AWARE LOCAL POPULATION DRAWING UNFORTUNATE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT ITS CENTRAL NMENT.

19. "MASSIVE" POLICE TRANSFERS: WHILE EVERYONE LOCALLY ASSOCIATES THE EARLY AUGUST TRANSFER OUT OF ALEXANDRIA OF 132 POLICE OFFICERS ("THE LARGEST SHAKEUP IN POLICE ANNALS" ACCORDING TO THE "WAFD," AUGUST 22, AND CONFIRMED BY LOCAL SOURCES) WITH THE GOVERNOR'S PROBLEMS, WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ESTABLISH ANY DIRECT LINK--OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS ONE THAT, AS A RESPECTED FORMER POLICE GENERAL, MA'AZ MUST HAVE BEEN CONSULTED. HOWEVER, RUMORS ALSO ABOUND THAT HIS CLOSEST ALLIES IN THE POLICE FORCE WERE AMONG THOSE TRANSFERRED. A GOVERNOR OF ANOTHER DELTA GOVERNORATE HAS EVEN MADE THE PRIVATE SUGGESTION THAT THE ACTIVIST MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, AHMED ROUCHDY, WAS PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION ON "THE MESS IN ALEXANDRIA," EVEN IF THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ABU BASHA, WAS (OR COULD) NOT. A FINAL TWIST TO THE SPECULATION IS THAT THE MOI WAS UNHAPPY WITH HOW THE SECURITY FORCES IN ALEXANDRIA WERE COPING WITH THE FUNDAMENTALISTS' CHALLENGE HERE (SEE ALEX 546 AND 587). COMMENT: WE EARLIER REPORTED ON THE REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE IN BEHAVIOR OF BOTH THE FUNDAMENTALISTS AND THE SECURITY FORCES AT THE RECENT KURBAN BAIRAM, AS COMPARED TO THE RAMADAN BAIRAM (ALEX 799).

END COMMENT.

¶10. HOW MUCH LONGER WILL MA'AZ REMAIN? WHILE THERE ARE SOME LOCAL NOTABLES WHO CONTINUE TO DEFEND MA'AZ (USUALLY HARKING BACK TO HIS ACKNOWLEDGED EXCELLENCE AS A POLICE GENERAL), THERE IS A GENERALIZED LOCAL SENTIMENT THAT HE MUST GO: HE HAS BEEN TOO DEBASED BY THE MONTHS-LONG CAMPAIGN IN THE "WAFD" (ON WHICH THE GOE HAS BEEN PUBLICLY SILENT) AND PERCEIVED INACTION ON THE CITY'S MOUNTING PROBLEMS (LED BY GARBAGE AND SEWAGE QUESTIONS), TO BE ABLE TO LEAD THIS RATHER RAMBUNCTIOUS CITY. PRESIDENT MUBARAK'S POSITION ON THE MA'AZ TROUBLES REMAINS SOMEWHAT OPAQUE: WHILE WE HAVE HAD REPORTS (REF B) THAT HE INTENDS TO LET THE GO TO TRIAL, HIS REMARKS EARLIER THIS SUMMER TO THE AMBASSADOR TENDED TO INDICATE THAT HE CONTINUES TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MA'AZ. SINCE THAT TIME, HOWEVER, NEW CHARGES HAVE EMERGED (SUCH AS IN PARA 6), PLUS-- AND IMPORTANTLY-- THE PRESIDENT HAS SPENT THE SUMMER IN ALEXANDRIA. WHILE HE HAS NOT BEEN SEEN SOCIALLY, MRS. MUBARAK HAS BEEN VISIBLE AT (AND KNOWN TO HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT) THE CITY'S BEACHES, AND IN AGAMI. AT THIS POINT, DECENCY WOULD SEEM TO REQUIRE THAT MA'AZ BE PERMITTED HIS DAY IN COURT (PARA 4), BUT WE SUSPECT THAT HE WILL BE REMOVED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, PROBABLY IN A CAMOUFLAGED TRANSFER OF SEVERAL GOVERNORS. IF HE IS NOT, THE GOE, AND SPECIFICALLY PRESIDENT MUBARAK, WILL FACE INCREASING CHARGES OF NEGLIGENCE OF EGYPT'S SECOND CITY, AND LOUDER COMPLAINTS THAN WHAT WE ARE ALREADY HEARING THAT MA'AZ IS BEING PROTECTED BECAUSE HE IS FROM MENOUFIA (REF A), AND HAS FAMILY TIES TO MUBARAK'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, ZAKI.

¶11. A FEW (INTERIM) CONCLUSIONS:

-- WHILE TEMPERS ARE RISING HERE, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO THE SEWAGE ISSUE, THE GOE HAS PROBABLY DISCOUNTED SOME OF THE GRIPES AS THEY COME FROM A CITY WHICH TRADITIONALLY IS ON DIFFICULT TERMS WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE IMPRESSION OF WEAKNESS, OR NEGLIGENCE, OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT REMAINS. AND, ALEXANDRIA'S PROBLEMS--FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL SUMMER SOJOURN HERE OF THE POLITICAL AND JOURNALISTIC LEADERSHIP OF CAIRO--CAN NO LONGER BE CALLED "LOCAL." INDEED, ALEXANDRIA AND ITS PROBLEMS, HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY FEATURED IN THE COLUMNS THIS SUMMER OF ALL THE NATIONAL DAILIES AND HAVE APPEARED, AS WELL WE UNDERSTAND, IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARABIC LANGUAGE MEDIA.

-- THE POLITICAL CHANGES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED HERE (PARAS 7-8), PARTIALLY AS A RESULT OF THE GOVERNOR'S PROBLEMS, HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE: APPARENT WEAK MEN HAVE REPLACED STRONG, NATIONAL FIGURES. WHILE DAOUD HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE LEADER OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY, HE HAD A MIXED REPUTATION AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. LOCALLY, HE IS KNS INTELLIGENT, BUT A HEAVY DRINKER, AND SOMEONE POOR ENOUGH (UNLIKE ABDELLAH) TO BE TEMPTED BY PATRONAGE HE WILL NOW CONTROL. THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL WILL LIKELY BE NON-CORRUPT, BUT NOT DYNAMIC ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH THE CITY'S MOUNTING PROBLEMS, WHILE MA'AZ CONCENTRATES ON HIS LEGAL DEFENSES.

-- AS IS ITS WONT, THIS CITY HAS ALSO HAD AN IMPACT ON THE REPUTATION OF SEVERAL NATIONAL LEADERS. DUE NOT ONLY TO HIS MANAGEMENT OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, BUT TO HIS PERSISTENT REPUTATION LOCALLY AS A NASSERIST, RIFAAT AL MAGHOUB IS VIEWED IN ALEXANDRIA AS ALMOST OUT OF THE RUNNING TO REPLACE KAMAL HASSAN ALI AS PRIME MINISTER. ON THE OTHER HAND, YOUSSEF WALLY, WHOSE ROLE

IN KING-MAKING IS KNOWN (IN ADDITION TO SELECTING ABDELLAH'S REPLACEMENT, WALLY IS ALLEGED PERSONALLY TO HAVE PICKED THE NEW GOVERNOR OF DAMIETTA, AS WELL AS SEVERAL OF THE MINISTERS IN MUBARAK'S CURRENT CABINET) AND HE IS NOW VIEWED LOCALLY AS THE FRONT RUNNER AMONG THOSE LIKELY TO BECOME PM. ADDITIONALLY, WALLY IS GENUINELY POPULAR IN THE AGRICULTURAL DELTA. FINALLY, AS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, THE OTHERWISE POPULAR KAMAL HASSAN ALI, HAS NOT EARNED ANY KUDOS HERE THIS SUMMER--EITHER FOR HIS LACK OF ACTION ON THE MA'AZ CASE, OR FOR HIS MIS-HANDLING OF THE CITY'S SEWAGE PROBLEMS. THAT TOPIC WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A SEPTTEL ABOUT THE TROUBLED SUMMER IN THIS CITY.

COOK